

- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the time by which this tribunal is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c) Customs, Excise and Gold (Control) Appellate Tribunal (CEGAT) is already an existing Tribunal constituted under the Finance Act, 1980 for hearing appeals against the orders of Commissioner (Appeals) in Customs/Excise matters. Proposals for constitution of a National Tribunal for Customs and Excise, in the light of the recommendations of the Law Commission in its 115th Report, can be considered only after an indepth study of the existing Tribunals is made by the Law Commission, in the light of the observations made by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of Shri L. Chandra Kumar Vs Union of India (CA 481/89).

[English]

Judicial Action Against Companies

1702. SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the departmental and judicial action is being taken against some companies for the evasion of excise and customs duties involving an amount of more than one million thousand of rupees;
- (b) if so, the details of such companies, State-wise and particularly in Uttar Pradesh;
- (c) the companies against whom such cases are pending for more than three years in Central Excise Gold Control Appellate Tribunal, High Courts and Supreme Court, as on date; and
- (d) the effective steps being taken or proposed to be taken by the Government for immediate recovery of amount?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Forged Drafts of Foreigners

1703. LT. GENL. PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI :

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA :

SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL :

SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated June 23, 1997 captioned "Lakhs withdrawn through forged drafts";

- (b) the facts of the matter reported thereon;
- (c) the *modus operandi* of the withdrawal through forged drafts;
- (d) the reasons for which the banks concerned in India could not detect the criminal conspiracy by some foreigners at the time of encashment of these forged drafts; and
- (e) the effective measures being taken by the Reserve Bank of India to prevent such heavy amounts being withdrawn through forged drafts by unscrupulous persons and plugging the lacunae in the existing procedure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Diversion of Funds

1704. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN :

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether attention of the Union Government has been drawn to the alleged diversion of Central Government funds for development schemes in West Bengal to unauthorised Personal Ledger Accounts (PLAs) for the last five/six years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Union Government have enquired into the matter;
- (d) if so, the findings thereof; and
- (e) the measures/action taken or proposed to be taken to check recurrence of such cases in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) Some complaints have been received in regard to financial irregularities in the State of West Bengal including that of alleged diversion of Central Government funds for development schemes in West Bengal to unauthorised Personal Ledger Accounts (PLA's).

Audit Report of Union Government for the period ending 31st March, 1996 on performance Reviews on selected centrally sponsored schemes which was presented in Parliament on 8th May, 1997 incorporates some points relating to procedural irregularities including diversion of Central funds and its deposit in non interest bearing Personal Ledger Account, misutilisation and non utilisation of funds, ineffective monitoring and evaluation etc. in respect of a number of States including West Bengal.